

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY

REMARKS, WITH THOSE OF GEN. KOZLOVSKY AND MR. TISHINSKY, ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS

TOWARD CONVERSION AGREEMENT

MINSK, BELARUS

MARCH 22, 1994

Mr. Tushinsky:

Distinguished U.S. Secretary of Defense Perry, Minister of Defense General Kozlovskiy, during today's meeting we had a considerable exchange of opinions about many areas of cooperation. We listened to the detailed reports of Mr. Barry Carter and Mr. Pugachev, Chief of the Scientific and Technical Bureau of the Ministry of Defense. In today's meeting, which was attended by representatives of three major enterprises of the Republic of Belarus who are blazing the trail in defense conversion, the Belomo Optical-Mechanical enterprise headed by General Director Mr. Gurskiy, the Computer Production Amalgamation headed by General Director Kharlap, and the Integral amalgamation, headed by the Chief Engineer of the Amalgamation Mr. Koloshkin, we heard short presentations and answers to the many questions that were posed. For the Belarusian side it was very interesting to become acquainted with possibilities for the expansion of cooperation in various fields, including expanding cooperation under the Nunn-Lugar program. It would be very wise to create a special joint committee on conversion which would allow us to accelerate the implementation of the programs that have been deliberated over the last two years, and to expand the process of conversion to other enterprises in the Republic of Belarus. Now allow me to give the floor to the Minister of Defense General Kozlovsky.

General Kozlovsky:

Distinguished Secretary Perry, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a pleasure to realize that between the United States of America and the Republic of Belarus, between the armed forces of the nations, between our peoples, we are building very warm relations. This statement on the principles of the Joint Committee on conversion of the defense industry that we are preparing to sign confirms the general tendency towards conversion of our industry to civilian uses. The problems of conversion is only one of the elements of our growing cooperation, and today we talked about many elements of that cooperation. What is most remarkable here is that the issue of conversion is being discussed not only by the leaders of our states but also by the heads of defense agencies -- it is the illustrating example of the peace loving tendencies of our states. The considerably high level of activities of meetings and negotiations held on various levels between our defense agencies shows our mutual interest in the importance of the future of our relations. All the meetings held before between the United States of America and the Republic of Belarus as well as the current ones give reason to believe that we have moved from the realm of theory to concrete steps, as we have agreed today. And the geographical distance and the differences between the economic potentials of our countries erect no obstacles to the expansion of cooperation. Belarus in its domestic policy has embarked on a course of civil peace and concourse, development of human rights and liberties, whose priority has been solidified by our Republic's legislation. Based upon this approach, our policy finds understanding among the

25-03 94 16:02

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world community. Belarus has declared its nuclear-free status, its aspiration to become a neutral state, and this will unquestionably be carried out. When defining directions of our cooperation in the military sphere, and in the area of conversion in particular, the major task is to optimize the defense interests and combine them with the subjective reorientation of society, reorientation of defense resources for the civilian needs. Our meeting based upon trust and mutual understanding, our talks with the Secretary will undoubtedly facilitate the strengthening of ties between our peoples and states. We are grateful to you, Mr. Secretary, for your understanding of the problems of the Belarusian people and your willingness to cooperate and assist in solution of these problems. We ask you to convey to the American people and the President of the United States of America our Best Wishes for Happiness and Prosperity. Thank you very much, thank you Ladies and Gentlemen.

(signing)

Dr. Perry:

I'd like to thank General Kozlovsky for all of the support you've given us on this trip and indeed in the months before this trip in getting ready for the meeting of this Joint Conversion Commission. I'd also like to congratulate Belarus for being so far along on its defense conversion program. Certainly a major part of the reason for the progress in Belarus is the outstanding leadership provided by Mr. Tushinsky, and we thank him very much for this. Besides the programs on defense conversion, we've moved ahead with projects for housing and retraining for demobilized officers. We have been discussing these projects now for more than six months. Today marks the day when we move from talking into action. And nowhere is that action more concrete than here in Belarus. As a vivid demonstration of that point is the three contracts which I am proud to announce the awards of today. These three contracts involve joint business initiatives between Belarusian defense firms and American companies. These contracts total 10 million dollars. We consider them pilot, or demonstration programs, and they will point the way to many more and many larger programs in the near future. These are the first contract awards for any defense conversion program made by the United States to any other nation. I'd like to introduce these joint teams to you, because this is what our Defense Conversion Commission is all about, it's action, it's forming business ventures. As we go ahead into the future in these programs, we have agreed with Mr. Tushinsky, that the next level of funding, the 25 million dollars for 1994, will be 10 million dollars in defense conversion, 10 million dollars in housing for retired military officers and 5 million dollars for training for retired military officers. To introduce these joint teams to you, let me introduce John Roberto, who is the American officer in charge of these contracts. Mr. Roberto.